/214 cont./

567 who were the servants or the suite with which eminent sultans and entire rich clans surrounded themselves, constituted a special kind of voluntary slavery. These people considered themselves independent of their patrons, but their long residence with the latter gave the patrons cause to declare their rights over them, as over slaves. The misunderstandings with the Tiulengut and [175] the hard position of the kul continued until 1859, when, on the proposal of the Governor General of Western Siberia, the sultans, biy, and elders of all the okrugs decided to free their slaves. From this time on the latter became free Kirghiz /Kazak/. According to the official figures, 400 persons were freed in the Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk oblasts, but this number is far below the actual number of former slaves.

566 But if official slavery has disappeared among the Kirghiz /Kazak/, it continues to exist in fact in a no less onerous form of economic slavery -- bondedness. In many nomadic villages one may meet poor Kirghiz /Kazak/ -- dzhetak (lying down, i.e., without livestock /215/ for a nomadic life) -- who live in the position of a worker without hours or pay for rich Kirghiz /Kazak/. Their position is extremely hard. They do every kind of work for a piece of bread and pitiful old clothes. They have no hopes of somehow working it out and saving in order to begin an independent life, since the master always considers the dzhetak a [184] debtor, although the debts are usually fictitious. This system is especially noticeable among the Irtysh Kirghiz /Kazak/. In every Kazak /Cossack/ settlement one can find dzhetak seeking shelter among the mud huts and stalls in the Kazak /Cossack/ yards and leading a pitiful life. For this the dzhetak usually does all the farm work for the Kazak /Cossack/ and often binds himself and his family. In the best cases he receives five to ten [434] rubles for the winter.

423 Economic inequality has long existed among the Kirghiz /Kazak/, being conditioned to a considerable degree by the abnormality of the forms of land ownership. The Kirghiz /Kazak/ own lands by the right of seizure established by customary law. /Illustration appears here./ A great inequality